

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

No. 547.—VOL. XI.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1894.

PRICE 1½d.

NO. 10 DOWNING STREET.

FEW houses of note are plainer in themselves, and yet more redolent of historic association, than the famous official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury. The Ministers of two centuries have met there; State secrets of the deepest moment have been whispered within its substantial walls. Downing Street is not architecturally attractive; yet, as Theodore Hook said, 'There is a fascination in the air of the little *cul-de-sac*; an hour's inhalation of its atmosphere affects some men with giddiness; others, with blindness, and very frequently with the most oblivious forgetfulness.' The sombre byway has a history.

Downing Street—built by Sir George Downing three hundred and thirty years ago—stands where the cockpit of the Palace of Whitehall was; and from the first it was the home of distinguished people. But George II. made it the home of statesmanship by conferring one of the houses in it as an official residence on Walpole and his successors in the office of First Lord for ever. During Sir Robert's long term of office, he lived there; and his example was followed by several of those who came after him. North had chambers on the first floor during his eventful period of power; and the story runs that after he resigned, at a critical period in the War of Independence, he forgot one night that he had given up his quarters with his office, and, yielding to the force of habit, ascended to his old rooms. Pitt, too, lived there, and held his Councils in the solemn and rather gloomy chambers; and he was so attached to the place, that he could be happy nowhere else. Downing Street was his home, as well as the headquarters of his power. Those who came immediately after him seem to have regarded the house in quite the opposite way; to them it was an office, not a residence; but Perceval, during the angry years of his official life, lived there, and there also discussed his policy.

At this time, a curious incident occurred in the hall of the house. There Wellington and Nelson met, it is said, for the only time in their lives. Both of them were waiting to see the Minister; and while they lingered in the anteroom, they got into conversation, though neither knew the other. The great soldier, then only at the outset of his fame, made so deep an impression on the great sailor, that Nelson afterwards inquired his name, and expressed his pleasure at the meeting. Many other notable figures have passed in and out of this massive old door, but they have not all left even so feeble an impress upon history as this trifling record. Lord Liverpool and Canning set up their domestic circles in Downing Street while in office; and Lord Grey also lived there, and was painted by Haydon as he pondered by the fire-side after a great debate. But neither Sir Robert Peel nor Lord Melbourne followed these examples; and after Grey, there was no real domestic life at No. 10 till Mr Disraeli first took office. In fact, the two great Parliamentary rivals of the later period alone restored to Downing Street its residential honours; for, like Lord Beaconsfield, Mr Gladstone made it his London home invariably while in office; and, unlike them, Mr W. H. Smith and Mr Balfour did nothing more than transact Treasury business there.

The house itself is solemn and solid; there is no garish adornment, incompatible with the grave dignity of statesmanship. As a residence, too, its conveniences make no compensation for its dullness. Its domestic accommodation is inadequate, and does not meet more than the simplest requirements. But for the work of the Minister its rooms are fairly suitable. Most historic of them all is the old Council Chamber on the ground-floor; a short passage joins it to the spacious hall, and it opens on to an anteroom. Here the conferences of many Ministries have been held, and the settlement of the most delicate affairs of the two centuries arrived at. It is a spacious chamber, and well

lighted; it looks out on St James's Park, and there are four substantial pillars at the lower corners. Around the walls are rows of books—a complete set of Hansard, the Statutes, and other works less interesting than useful. The Old Council Chamber has fallen from its high estate; no longer do Ministers meet there. When Lord Salisbury held his Councils at the Foreign Office, it was given over to his private secretaries; and Mr Gladstone made no change in this disposition of the chamber, but held the Councils in his own much smaller room up-stairs. This apartment is in the brightest corner of the house, and overlooks St James's Park and the Horse-guards parade, with a view of the Duke of York's Column in the distance. The desk at which the late Premier worked was placed in the corner of the room nearest the Park, where the light is brightest and the scene most cheerful. There, sitting in a chair which was anything but luxurious, the Prime Minister performed his manifold labours, surrounded by despatch-boxes, and with communication to all parts of the house at his hand in the shape of electric bells and speaking-tubes. A large open fireplace, a quaintly carved mantel, and a heavy, old-fashioned candelabrum, are signs of the past which seem not, after all, very incongruous with the red and black despatch-boxes, and the 'Bradshaw' and 'Dod' of modern life lying about the room. There is another chamber close at hand in which Mr Gladstone sometimes worked, but it claims no special notice.

Beyond the chief workroom and Council Room, the reception chambers begin. There are three of them. The first, proceeding in this direction, is the smallest; and its walls, panelled in white, bear some interesting portraits. The larger of the rooms on this side is the principal reception or drawing room. It is not a cheerful apartment; its two windows have a very uninteresting outlook; and in daylight the opposite end of the room, behind the pillars, is almost dismal. Through a small antechamber the dining-room is reached. This is also gloomy, so far as its outlook is concerned; its windows give a view of nothing more cheerful than the back of some official buildings. But the inner view is dignified and impressive. The vaulted and handsomely decorated ceilings, the rich, dark tints of the panelled walls, and the many portraits hung there, leave a sense almost of satisfaction with the partial gloom which merely mellows the scene, and helps the mind the better to conjure up pictures of past assemblies therein. The portraits are interesting. Walpole, first official resident, is robed in gorgeous state, and looks down on the chamber from his exaltation above the mantel. There is a portrait of Lord Godolphin, which Lady de Grey gave to the house seventy years ago; and a likeness of ill-fated Spencer Perceval's amiable face with its eloquent eyes. Portraits of the first Duke of Leeds, Lord Delaware, and Sir John Lowther, the last presented by Lord Lonsdale, are also in this dining-room, where Lord Beaconsfield gave his Parliamentary dinners, and some State banquets are still held.

When you have seen the passage leading to the Foreign Office, and the door on the other

side of the way which gives communication to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's official house, No. 11, you have seen all that the place has to show. And very few save the privileged may see even that. Obviously, the central abode of Government cannot be made a popular exhibition and one of the sights of London. But if that were possible, few show-places of historic interest would stimulate the sympathetic imagination to a greater extent—and an extent so utterly out of proportion with the physical interest of the fabric. As Hook said, the fascination of Downing Street is in its memory-laden air.

AT MARKET VALUE.*

CHAPTER XXVI.—A QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP.

AND now that all was over, and her Arnold had come home to her, Kathleen Hessegrave felt as if the rest mattered little. He was back; he knew all; he saw all; he understood all; he loved her once again far more dearly than ever. Woman-like, she was more than satisfied to have her lover by her side; all else was to her a mere question of detail.

And yet, the problem for Arnold was by no means solved. He had no way as yet of earning his own living; still less had he any way of earning a living for Kathleen. Kathleen herself, indeed, happy enough to have found her sailor again, would have been glad to marry him as he stood, maimed hand and all, and to have worked at her art for him, as she had long worked for Reggie; but that, of course, Arnold could never have dreamed of. It would have been grotesque to give up the Axminster revenues on conscientious grounds, and then allow himself to be supported by a woman's labour. Rufus Mortimer, too, ever generous and ever chivalrous, would willingly have done anything in his power to help them. But such help as that also Arnold felt to be impossible. He must fight out the battle of life on his own account to the bitter end; and though this last misfortune of his crushed hand was an accident that might have happened to any sailor any day, it made him feel none the less that painful consciousness he had often felt before, of his own inferiority and comparative inability to do for himself what he saw so many of his kind doing round him on every side without apparent effort. He didn't care to acknowledge himself a human failure.

Of course, he had the fifty pounds he had received for his translation of the Italian manuscript; but even Arnold Willoughby couldn't live on fifty pounds for ever, though, no doubt, he could make it go at least as far as any one else of his class could. And it was only a stray windfall, not a means of livelihood. What Arnold wanted, now the sea was shut

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against him, and painting most difficult, was some alternative way of earning money for himself, and, if possible, for Kathleen. As to how he could do that, he had for the moment no idea; he merely straggled on upon his fifty pounds, spreading it out as thin as fifty pounds can be made to spread nowadays in this crowded Britain of ours.

But if this problem caused anxiety to Arnold Willoughby, it caused at least as much more to Rufus Mortimer. As a rule, people who have never known want themselves realise but vaguely the struggles and hardships of others who stand face to face with it. They have an easy formula—'Lazy beggar!'—which covers for their minds all possible grounds of failure or misfortune in other people. (Though they are not themselves always so remarkable for their industry.) But Rufus Mortimer, with his delicately sensitive American nature, as sensitive in its way as Arnold's own, understood to the full the difficulties of the case; and having made himself responsible to some extent for Arnold's and Kathleen's happiness by bringing them together again, gave himself no little trouble, now that matter was arranged, to seek some suitable work in life for Arnold.

This, however, as it turned out, was no easy matter. Even backed up by Rufus Mortimer's influence, Arnold found there were few posts in life he could now adequately fill; while the same moral scruples that had made him in the first instance renounce altogether the Axminster property continued to prevent his accepting any post that he did not consider an honest and useful one. It occurred to Mortimer, therefore, one day when he met Reggie on Kathleen's doorstep, and, entering, found Kathleen herself with every sign of recent tears, that one of the first ways of helping the young couple would be the indirect one of getting rid of Reggie. He suspected that young gentleman of being a perpetual drain upon Kathleen's resources, and he knew him to have certainly no such conscientious scruples. So, after a little brief telegraphic communication with his firm in America, he sent one morning for Reggie himself, 'on important business'; and Reggie, delighted by anticipation at the phrase, put on his best necktie and his onyx links, and drove round (in a hansom) to Mortimer's house in Great Stanhope Street.

Mortimer plunged at once into the midst of affairs. 'Suppose you were to get a post of three hundred and fifty a year in America, would you take it?' he inquired.

Reggie brightened at the suggestion. 'Pounds, not dollars, of course?' he answered with characteristic caution, for where money was concerned, Reggie's mind was pure intellect.

Rufus Mortimer nodded. 'Yes, pounds, not dollars,' he said; 'a clerk's post in my place in the States; railway engineering works, you know. We control the business.'

'It might suit me,' Reggie answered, with

great deliberation, impressed with the undesirability of letting himself go too cheap. 'Three hundred and fifty; or say, four hundred.'

'I beg your pardon,' Rufus Mortimer interposed with bland decision. 'I said three hundred and fifty. I did not say four hundred. And the questions before the house are simply these two—first, whether you care to accept such a post or not; and second, whether I shall find you're qualified to accept it.'

'Oh, I see,' Reggie answered, taken aback; for he had not yet met Rufus Mortimer in this his alternative character as the stern capitalist. 'Whereabouts is your place? So much depends upon the locality.'

'It's in Philadelphia,' Mortimer answered, smiling. He could see at a glance Reggie was hesitating as to whether he could tear himself away from the Gaiety, and the dear boys, and the gross mud-honey of town in general, to emigrate to America.

Reggie held his peace for a moment. He was calculating the pros and cons of the question at issue. It spelt expatriation, of course; that he recognised at once; so far from the theatres, the racecourses, the Park, the dear boys of the Tivoli, and Charlie Owen. But still, he was young, and he would always have Florrie. Perhaps there might be 'life' even in Philadelphia. 'Is it a big town?' he asked dubiously; for his primeval notions of American geography were distinctly hazy.

'The third biggest in the Union,' Mortimer answered, eyeing him hard.

'In the What?' Reggie repeated, somewhat staggered at the sound; visions of some huge workhouse rose dimly in the air before his mental view.

'In the United States,' Mortimer answered with a compassionate smile. 'In America, if it comes to that. The third biggest in America. About three-quarters the size of Paris. Will a population of a million afford scope enough for you?'

'It sounds well,' Reggie admitted. 'And I suppose there are amusements there—something to occupy a fellow's mind in his spare time? or else I don't put much stock in it.'

'I think the resources of Philadelphia will be equal to amusing you,' Mortimer answered grimly. 'It's a decent-sized village.' He didn't dwell much upon the converse fact that Reggie would have to work for his three hundred and fifty. 'My people in America will show him all that soon enough,' he thought. 'The great thing just now is to get him well out of England, by hook or by crook, and leave the way clear for that angel and Willoughby.'

For Rufus Mortimer, having once espoused Arnold Willoughby's cause, was almost as anxious to see him satisfactorily settled in life as if it had been his own love-affairs he was working for, not his most dangerous rival's.

The offer was a tempting one. After a little humming and hawing, and some explanation by Mortimer of the duties of the situation—the last thing on earth that Reggie himself would ever have troubled his head about under the circumstances—the young man about town at last consented to accept the post offered to him; and to ship himself forthwith from his

native land, with Florrie in tow, at Rufus Mortimer's expense, by an early steamer.

'A town of a million people,' he observed to Florrie, 'must have decent amusements even in America.'

And now that that prime encumbrance was clear out of the way, Mortimer's next desire was to find something to do for Arnold, though Arnold was certainly a most difficult man to help in the matter of an appointment. That horrid conscience of his was always coming in to interfere with everything. Mortimer and Kathleen had ventured to suggest, indeed, that under these altered circumstances, when his hand made it almost impossible for him to get work of any sort, he should disclose his personality to the new Lord Axminster, and accept some small allowance out of the Membury Castle property. But against that suggestion Arnold stood quite firm. 'No, no,' he said; 'I may live or I may starve; but I won't go back upon my whole life and principles. I gave up my property in order that I might live by my own exertions; and by my own exertions I will live, or go to the wall manfully. I don't demand now that I should earn my livelihood by manual labour, as I once desired to do: under these altered conditions, having lost the use of my hand in the pursuit of an honest trade for the benefit of humanity, I'm justified, I believe, in earning my livelihood in any way that my fellow-creatures are willing to pay me for; and I'll take in future any decent work that such a maimed being as myself is fitted for. But I won't come down upon my cousin Algy. It wouldn't be fair; it wouldn't be right; it wouldn't be consistent; it wouldn't be honest. I'm dead by law; dead by the decision of the highest court in the kingdom; and dead I will remain for all legal purposes. Algy has succeeded to the title and estates in that belief, which I have not only permitted him to hold, but have deliberately fostered. For myself and all who come after me, I have definitely got rid of my position as a peer, and have chosen to become a common sailor. If I were to burst in upon Algy now with proof of my prior claim, I would upset and destroy his peace of mind; make him doubt for the position and prospects of his children; and burden him with a sense of insecurity in his tenure which I have no right in the world to disturb his life with. When once I did it, I did it once for all; to go back upon it now would be both cruel and cowardly.'

'You're right,' Kathleen cried, holding his hand in her own. 'I see you're right, my darling; and if ever I marry you, I will marry you clearly on that understanding, that you are and always will be plain Arnold Willoughby.'

So Rufus Mortimer could do nothing but watch and wait. Meanwhile, Arnold went round London at the pitiful task of answering advertisements for clerks and other small posts, and seeking in vain for some light employment. Winter was drawing on; and it became clearer and clearer each day to Mortimer that in Arnold's present state of health he ought, if possible, to spend the coldest months in the

south of Europe. But how get him to do it? That was now the puzzle. Mortimer was half afraid he had only rescued Kathleen's lover, and brought them together again in peace, in order to see him die with his first winter in England. And it was no use to urge upon him the acceptance of a temporary loan, or even to ask him to go abroad on the strength of that fifty pounds; for, as matters now stood, Arnold was so anxious to husband his funds to the utmost and to look out for future work, that nothing would induce him to move away from London.

While things were in this condition, Rufus was startled one day, as he sat in his padded arm-chair in a West End club, reading a weekly paper, to see Arnold Willoughby's name staring him full in the face from every part of a two-column article. He fixed his eyes on the floating words that seemed to dance before his sight. 'If this is a first attempt,' the reviewer said, 'we must congratulate Mr Willoughby upon a most brilliant *début* in the art of fiction.' And again: 'We know not whether the name of "Arnold Willoughby" is the writer's real designation, or a mere *nom de guerre*; but in any case we can predict for the entertaining author of "An Elizabethan Seadog" a brilliant career as a writer of the new romance of history.' 'Mr Willoughby's style is careful and polished; his knowledge of the dialect of the sea is "peculiar and extensive;" while his fertility of invention is really something stupendous. We doubt, indeed, whether any Elizabethan sailor of actual life could ever have described his Spanish adventures in such graphic and admirable language as Mr Willoughby puts into the mouth of his imaginary hero; but that is a trivial blemish: literature is literature: as long as the narrative imposes upon the reader for the moment, which it undoubtedly does, we are ready to overlook the unhistorical character of the thrilling details, and the obvious improbability that such a person as Master John Collingham of Holt in Norfolk would have been able to address the Council of Ten with such perfect fluency in "very choice Italian."'

Rufus Mortimer laid down the paper in a tumult of delight. Here at last he saw a chance for the solution of the problem of Arnold's future. Though art had failed him, he might live by literature. To be sure, one swallow doesn't make a summer, nor one good review (alas!) the fortune of a volume. But Rufus Mortimer didn't know that; and he felt sure in his heart that a man who could write so as to merit such praise from one of the most notoriously critical of modern organs, must certainly be able to make a living by his pen, even if he had only a left hand left wherewith to wield it. So off he rushed at once in high glee to Arnold Willoughby's, only stopping on the way to buy a copy of the review at the railway bookstall in the nearest underground station.

When he reached Arnold's lodgings, now removed much farther west, near Kathleen Hesslegrave's rooms, he hurried up-stairs in a fervour of good spirits, quite rejoiced to be the first to bring such happy tidings. Arnold

read the review hastily; then he looked up at Mortimer, who stood expectant by; and his face grew almost comical in its despair and despondency. 'Oh, this is dreadful!' he exclaimed under his breath. 'Dreadful, dreadful, dreadful!'

'Dreadful?' Mortimer interposed, quite taken aback. 'Why, Willoughby, I was delighted to be the first to bring it to you. I thought you'd be so awfully glad to see it. What on earth do you disapprove of? It's all so favourable.' Did the man expect mere fulsome adulation?

'Favourable? Oh yes,' Arnold answered; 'it's favourable enough, for that matter: but just look how they treat it! In spite of my repeated and reiterated statement that the manuscript was a genuine Elizabethan document, they insist on speaking of it as an original romance, and attributing the authorship to me, who only translated it. They doubt my word about it!'

'But that doesn't matter much,' Mortimer cried, severely practical, 'as long as attention is drawn to the work. It'll make the book sell; and if ever you should want to write anything else on your own account, it'll give you a better start and secure you attention.'

'I don't want attention under false pretences,' Arnold retorted. 'One doesn't like to be doubted, and one doesn't want to get credit for work one hasn't done. I should hate to be praised so. It's only the translation that's mine. I've none of these imaginative gifts the critic credits me with. Indeed, I've half a mind to sit down this minute to write and explain that I don't deserve either their praise or their censure.'

From this judicious course Mortimer did not seek to dissuade him; for, being an American born, he thoroughly understood the value of advertisement; and he knew that a lively correspondence on the authenticity of the book could not fail to advertise it better than five hundred reviews, good, bad, or indifferent. So he held his peace, and let Arnold do as he would about his reputation for veracity.

As they were talking it over, however, the door opened once more, and in rushed Kathleen, brimming over with excitement, and eager to show Arnold another review which she had happened to come across in a daily paper. Arnold took it up and read it. His face changed as he did so; and Mortimer, who looked over his shoulder as he read, could see that this review, too, contained precisely the same cause of complaint, from Arnold's point of view, as the other one—it attributed the book as an original romance to the transcriber and translator, and complimented him on his brilliant and creative imagination. Here was indeed a difficulty. Arnold could hardly show Kathleen the same distress at the tone of the notice which he had shown Rufus Mortimer; she came in so overflowing with womanly joy at his success, that he hadn't the heart to damp it; so he tried his best to look as if he liked it, and said as little about the matter either way as possible.

Mortimer, however, took a different view of the situation.

'This is good,' he said; 'very good. These two articles strike the keynote. Your book is certainly going to make a success. It will boom through England. I'm sorry now, Willoughby, you sold the copyright for all time outright to them.'

'PHOTOGRAPHY UP TO DATE.'

THE Photographic art has been brought so completely within reach of the public, that any one who can spare a few pence may nowadays possess a specimen of it. This familiarity with its wonderful results, however, co-exists with much ignorance of its methods, and of what may be called its more curious or recondite capabilities. As an illustration of the popular ignorance about photography, an instance may be cited that actually occurred not so very long ago. A thief went ostensibly to have his photograph taken, but really to see what he could steal. He seized his opportunity when the photographer had retired to develop the plate, and made off with a valuable lens, quite unconscious of the fact that the few seconds he had sat facing the camera had placed his portrait in the hands of the operator. Of course, the means of identifying him speedily found its way into the hands of the police. An ignorant misconception of exactly the opposite character was displayed some years ago in a then popular drama. The culprit is detected in consequence of his having accidentally committed his crime in front of a camera and lens which a photographer had by chance left in the place. The author evidently entertained the strange notion that, in all places and under all circumstances, a camera and lens would take a picture of what passed before them without the intervention of any sort of human agency.

In various other ways, however, photography has of late years been applied with remarkable success to the detection of crime. A paper just published by a scientist on the application of the art in this direction proves, among other interesting facts, that by means of the camera, not only erasures in a document which cannot be detected by the eye, but the minutest differences in the inks employed, can at once be demonstrated in an enlarged copy of the writing, by the use of suitably coloured light and colour-sensitive plates. Captain Abney, R.E., the chairman of the Photographic Society of Great Britain, states that he once examined an engraving which was reputed to be of considerable value, and by means of photography he was able to bring out the original signature under a spurious one which had been added. The picture, in fact, turned out to be utterly worthless.

The expectation of seeing objects depicted in their natural colours by photography has acted like fascination on many minds, and it would seem that the case is not altogether hopeless, since it is reported that the art of reproducing colours true to nature with the camera has just been discovered by a clever Berlin chemist. If true, the discovery is one of the most important that have been made in photography. M.

Claudet records that Becquerel and Sir John Herschel both succeeded in impressing the image of the solar spectrum, and even of coloured maps, upon a silver plate prepared with chlorine. The image, however, was not permanent. The great point to be attained has always been the fixing of the tints, but whether or not the Berlin experimentalist referred to has successfully overcome this difficulty remains to be seen.

Another wonder of photography is the success that has been achieved in taking photographs of objects in motion. In fact, so great has been the advance in recent years in the making of gelatine dry-plates, that an instantaneous photograph was a short time ago taken of an express train when running at sixty miles an hour, the print showing distinctly, and without blur, the locomotive and five carriages. Successful negatives are now frequently taken where exposure only lasts the one-thousandth part of a second; and a shot or shell has even been depicted at the instant of its leaving the cannon's mouth. By an ingenious mechanical contrivance, the rate at which the shot travels can be ascertained at the same time.

Photographing domestic animals is difficult enough under the most advantageous circumstances when only the ordinary camera is employed, but what the obstacles must be like when ferocious wild beasts are the objects to be photographed, under similar conditions, only those who have successfully and repeatedly performed the operation can give us any clear idea. Mr Gambier Bolton, F.Z.S., whose achievements in this particular direction are so well known, recently inaugurated in London a series of illustrated lectures, with the intention of popularising this interesting branch of the photographic art. His photos of wild beasts are as natural and characteristic in pose as they are instinct with life and admirable in technique.

Photographing under water, although perhaps not so exciting a feature of the art, seems, from all accounts, to be equally interesting and instructive in its way as the photographing of wild animals. A lens for seeing under water is described as producing an effect both astonishing and delightful. Experiments were made in 1889 in the Mediterranean to ascertain how far daylight actually penetrated under the surface; and in very clear water near Corsica, and eighteen miles from land, the limit of daylight was found by means of photographic plates to be fifteen hundred and eighty feet.

A short time ago a Frenchman brought himself to the notice of scientific naturalists by undertaking an exploring tour of the Red Sea, from which he brought back a strange and curious collection of fish and shells, embracing several specimens entirely unknown. Continuing his researches on the coast of France, he assumed a diver's costume to observe at the bottom of the sea the metamorphoses of certain mollusca impossible to cultivate in aquaria. He was struck with the wonderful beauty of submarine landscapes, and resolved to photograph what he could, since a simple description would savour too much of an over-vidid imagination. At first he worked in shallow water with a water-tight apparatus, and the clearness

of the water allowed him sufficient light to sensitise the plates. But proportionally as the depth increased, clearness diminished, and the motion of the waves clouded his proofs. Then the young scientist conceived the idea of utilising magnetism in an apparatus of his own invention. This apparatus consists essentially of a barrel filled with oxygen, and surmounted by a glass bell containing an alcohol lamp. On the flame of the lamp, by means of a mechanical contrivance, powdered magnesium is thrown, flaring as often as a view is taken. The barrel is pierced with holes on the lower side in such a manner that as the oxygen diminishes the sea-water enters, so preserving the equilibrium between external and internal pressure. Beautiful submarine photographs taken on the very bed of the Mediterranean at Banyuls-sur-Mer, near the Spanish border, have been produced in this way.

In curious interest perhaps, what is called Microscopic Photography, or the reduction of large objects into such small dimensions as to be scarcely visible to the naked eye, deserves a prominent position in the more experimental branches of the art. Mr Shadbolt, in 1854, was the first who executed these small photographs by making an achromatic object-glass one or one inch and a half focus the lens of a camera, and using a peculiar kind of collodion. His portraits varied from one-twentieth to one-fortieth of an inch in diameter, and would bear to be magnified a hundred times.

Hardly a day passes now but new and important photographs are produced by cameras of ever-increasing power. New stars have been revealed that were heretofore obscured from man. It is difficult to realise how far these worlds are from us. One of the most popular and eminent lecturers on astronomy is Sir Robert Ball, who uses simple and graphic illustrations to give his hearers ideas of magnitude and distance. For instance, he says that going at the rate of the electric telegraph—that is, one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second—it would take seventy-eight years to telegraph a message to the most distant telescopic stars. But the camera has revealed stars far more distant than these, some of which, if a message had, been sent in the year A.D. 1—that is to say, 1894 years ago—the message would only just have reached some of them, and would be still on the way to others, going at the rate of one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles a second.

The enlargement of photographs, though less wonderful to the common apprehension than their reduction to the infinitely small, is, practically, not less interesting and curious. These enlarged pictures were first exhibited by M. Claudet at a soirée of the British Association some years ago. By means of the solar camera, photographic cartes were magnified to the size of life. The effect when first seen was pronounced very striking and beautiful. M. Claudet at the same time also exhibited some photographs taken by the Count de Montizon of all the most curious animals of the Zoological Gardens; and instantaneous views of Paris by Ferrier, showing the Boulevards full of carriages and people, as they are in the middle of the day.

But the most striking photographs of this topographical character are those which have been taken in balloons floating some four thousand feet above the earth. The first experiments of this kind were made by Mr Negretti in Coxwell's 'Mammoth' balloon in the summer of 1863. They were regarded with much interest at the time, as several problems were involved in success or failure—such, for example, as the difficulty of operating at all in a moving vehicle; and the question whether the actinic power of the solar rays would be as effective up aloft as on the surface of the earth. It was not only the onward motion of the balloon that created a difficulty, but its rotating motion, to obviate which, a good deal of ingenuity in constructing and manipulating the apparatus was needful.

A photographer who recently made several photographs from a balloon has made the following instructive remarks on the possibilities of balloon photography: 'At the height of a mile I was amazed at the clearness of the atmosphere, and the sharp definition of the landscape immediately beneath. I took with me a large camera, and had no trouble in operating it. About twenty good negatives were the result of the trip.'

An exceedingly ingenious invention consisting of a camera combined with a parachute, especially designed for obtaining photographs of fortifications and of the camps of the enemy, although pictures may also be made for surveying purposes, would seem to mark an important step in the science of modern warfare. The parachute is snugly folded in a thin case at the end of a rocket, which is fired to the required height, and bursts open by means of a time-fuse. The explosion sets free the parachute, which is protected from injury by means of a casing of asbestos. The parachute has a number of thin umbrella ribs, and these are forced outward, and kept in that position by means of a strong spiral spring. From the parachute a camera is suspended; and a string held by the operator is attached by a universal joint to the bottom of the device, for the purpose of pulling the parachute back. The camera is fitted with an instantaneous shutter, operated by clockwork, so as to give several exposures at intervals. At the back of the box is an arrangement by which the plates can be manipulated as though by mechanical agency. A swinging motion can be given the camera by the operator, and this will enable him to obtain successive pictures over a wide area. The whole arrangement is exceedingly clever; and if it can be utilised for practical purposes, there is no doubt that 'sky-rocket' photographs will play an important part in the military manœuvres of the future.

From time to time during the last few years there have been various systems advanced and given a practical trial for 'telegraphing' portraits, diagrams, outline drawings, and specimens of handwriting; and an American electrical engineer claims to have discovered a remarkably simple method by which pictures, &c., can be transmitted long distances through the medium of only a single wire. N. S. Amstutz is the reputed inventor; and it is stated that certain

Continental authorities have taken up the matter for the purpose of telegraphing pictures of military evolutions and portraits of fugitives from justice; while in Germany it is understood the Kaiser uses the system for transmitting his imperial signature to the seat of government whenever occasion calls for it. In theory the idea is excellent. 'A crime is committed in Paris, and the assassin flees to America; a photograph of the culprit is found in France; you throw a bright light upon it, place it in front of the transmitter, which you connect with the Atlantic cable, set up a receiver in New York, and in a few minutes the chief of the New York police is in possession of a photographic representation, which is far better than any description.' In other words, if the predictions of a certain learned French Professor, who recently expressed his views on the possibilities of the project, prove correct, we must not be surprised if we are some day enabled to see what is passing in another part of the world without leaving our chairs.

One more of the surprising effects of the art remains to be mentioned here—namely, its application to illustrate geometrical figures and problems. This followed rapidly upon the discovery of the principle of the stereoscope. Every one who has gone through the eleventh Book of Euclid is aware of the great difficulty which is superadded to that of the problem itself by the number of lines crossing each other on a flat surface. By producing these lines on stereoscopic slides they are made to appear as if the figure was made of wires stretching from point to point in space. Planes are seen to intersect each other with as much distinctness as if they were sheets of cardboard inclined at various angles; and solid angles and pyramids have their edges and angular points in such tangible relief that a model could not afford a better illustration of the text. The letters, too, are so contrived as to appear to belong to the points to which they refer, and to stand out at the proper distances from the spectator.

Before concluding this article we may also notice some remarkable instances of grotesque or caricature photography. When the lamented Abraham Lincoln was President of the United States, his photographic portrait was exhibited, and to the naked eye appeared as if pitted with the smallpox. On examining the dots with a microscope, they were, however, found to consist of portraits of generals, politicians, divines, poets, actresses, and other well-known characters suitably placed. Jeff. Davis would be found in the President's eye; McClellan on the tip of his nose; Miss Cushman, or some other sweet lady, on his lips; and so on. All these likenesses were said to be very striking, and the whole caricature was regarded as a felicitous performance. Something of the same comic character was done in Rome some years ago, when well-known figures, suggestive of a satirical application, were published with the heads of public characters. Thus, the face of Antonelli appeared on the shoulders of Fra Diavolo; and the queen of Naples was made to figure as Moll Flagon. Even the Pope himself was not spared. The speedy result, how-

ever, was a Papal edict against the enormity, by which the photographic artists were subjected to the loss of their places and instruments, a fine of one hundred dollars, and a year in the galleys! The models who dared to sit for such figures were denounced in the same penalties.

THE SULTAN'S EGG.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

PEOPLE thought it very strange that Roland Haynes should go to sea again, it seemed such an absurd thing for the owner of one of the finest farms in the county of Salop so to do. But when his wife died, Roland became restless, and his life grew a burden to him. He felt stifled and oppressed, and the sight even of the laurels and laurustinus bushes around the house became hateful. He strove against the feeling with all his might; but do what he would, his thoughts and desires wandered away back to the old days of tall ships, and stormy winds, and wild waters, and all the majesty and beauty of the great ocean on which his early life had been passed. He heard calling to him 'the moanings of the homeless sea,' and went to it.

'Jim,' he said to his reformed scapegrace of a brother, 'I'm off to sea again. I can't stand this place, now Alice has gone. Do your best to look after it. I know I can trust you as myself to take good care of Nora. I'll be back again in a twelvemonth.'

So Roland left the diamond-latticed, black-joisted, rambling old Clayhorns, as the place was called, where generations upon generations of stalwart yeomen had lived and died, satisfied with their lot, and innocent of the *wandergeist*, and went off to see if salt water could allay his perturbed spirit. In most households, but perhaps not for very many years, a wanderer will make his appearance. Roland had been the first of his race, and the simple inlanders deemed him as in some sort possessed.

One morning, rising a boy, he had left the old Clayhorns, and the little village of Hampton-Kirby, nestling amongst its chestnuts and elms, only to reappear a bearded man, grave and bronzed, bringing with him a sweet young girl-wife. He had thrown himself headlong into life's battle, emerging chastened and successful. Therefore, he was received back into his inheritance with open arms, and all people, except his brother James, rejoiced.

So the wanderer settled down, as he thought, to pass the remainder of his days quietly on the broad pasture-lands of Clayhorns. But they were all dead now, all except James and little Nora, his one child, who was just twelve when her father left. And every time he returned she was a year older. He sailed his

own ship, and could afford to choose his freights and measure his absences.

A year to a day, almost, and Nora, at school in Shrewsbury town, would be driven to the station, sure of seeing there the bold, handsome face she loved so well and missed so bitterly, and of being folded to the broad breast of the wanderer before all the sympathising crowd, who would remark one to the other: 'It be Capt'in Roly a-comed whoam from zee to 'is little gel.'

Then came the run home for a brief two or three months' holiday, a time in which Captain Roly and his daughter were all in all to each other and inseparable. These were the epochs that in those days she measured her life by.

When Nora was sixteen, her father, departing as usual, said: 'I'm getting tired, my darling. This shall be my last voyage. I'll come home and stay there, see my pet married—not to a sailor, though, I hope—and, in God's good time, have my bones laid alongside those others in the old churchyard over yonder.'

So he sailed away on his last voyage, as he promised it should be. But he never came home any more; and neither of Captain Roly nor of his good ship the *Wrekin* could any tidings be heard. Money was not spared in the endeavour; but the only scrap of news gained was that the *Wrekin* had been spoken in such and such a latitude and longitude on her passage to China, 'All well.'

A year went by—a year of mourning and broken-hearted wretchedness for poor Nora, and then James Haynes—pretty certain, this time, that his brother was not above-ground—came out in quite a different character. He who had always been so quiet and unassuming, as befitted a man who has had his chances in the world, and tried, and failed miserably again and again, suddenly grew big and blustered, boasting of what might have been, and what yet should be. Briefly, there was no will discovered; and presently, scoundrel James laid claim to the whole estate, on the ground of Nora's illegitimacy. Proceedings were at once taken by both sides, for Squire Melton and the Vicar, and a few other of Captain Roly's old friends at Hampton-Kirby, were quick to espouse the orphan's cause and compass the downfall of the usurper. No marriage certificate could be found at the Clayhorns. All we knew vaguely, and as dropped by themselves, was that Nora's parents had been married in Ireland; therefore, in that country a search was carried on.

Meanwhile, Nora left Clayhorns and came to live with us in the adjoining hamlet of Wrockwardine. My mother was a far-off cousin of Captain Roly's, as everybody around called him; and I had sailed two voyages in the *Wrekin* myself, and but for an accident, should have gone the last as chief-officer of her.

It may perhaps be imagined, then, how we petted and condoled with pretty Nora when she came to us for refuge from the harsh unkindness of her uncle, and one of the farm-women he had installed as housekeeper at Clayhorns. From both her parents James had received nothing but benefits; yet he never seemed to tire of taunting the girl about the mystery surrounding their union, a diversion in which his creature joined *con amore*. So, as I have said, Nora came to us in our little cottage at Wrockwardine.

Many a time she would exclaim: 'I know there was a will! My father told me so. He even told me where he kept it—in the "Sultan's Egg," which no one but himself could open. But the egg has gone. He must have taken it to sea with him. But oh,' she would say, 'never mind the will! Let everything go, if we can but find the other paper. Where *were* they married?' And the poor child would cry as if her heart was breaking.

But look as they might, search where they would, they seemed never able to discover where Captain Roly had found the beautiful, dark-haired, blue-eyed girl that he had brought home with him after those long years of absence, what time the May flowers and violets were blowing at Clayhorns, and all the land was quick with spring.

Never a very communicative man, he appeared to have confided the story of his wooing to nobody. His wife had been equally reticent, whether of design, or of pure unconcern at what people might say or think, was difficult now to guess. The only thing that came to light during these investigations was actual proof of a will having been in existence, thus confirming Nora's story. Agents unearthed a firm of lawyers in Chancery Lane who remembered drawing up such an instrument for Roland Haynes just about the time he returned to the old life. But they positively refused to commit themselves to any statement as to its contents. They could or would remember nothing. Captain Haynes had applied to them as a stranger, not a client. They had obliged him; and he had gone his way, taking the duly witnessed document with him. Nora had seen him place it in the Sultan's Egg—a curious piece of Eastern workmanship, of which more anon. Probably, so the gossips said, the captain had put his marriage lines there also—always supposing them to have had existence—and James had made away with the lot.

Meanwhile, I, having my living to get, went off to sea, leaving Nora, then a tall slip of a girl, all legs and wings, so to speak, at home with my mother and a spinster aunt, both doing their best to spoil her. On my return, eighteen months later, I found the case 'Haynes v. Haynes' still unsettled, and Nora, by some magic process, transformed into a very beautiful and stately young woman, whom I was actually afraid to offer to kiss until she took the initiative.

Injunctions and all sorts of other things had been served upon James Haynes, who, however, still held possession, and, to all appearance, was master at Clayhorns. The lawyers, so far as I could understand, had taken the case from

court to court, had dropped it in a certain one, and now wanted more money to begin over afresh with. Nora's friends had already spent a large sum in defending her rights without any prospect of repayment, and they were beginning to get dubious. Also, there was some talk of James's marrying his housekeeper, the ex-farm labourer before spoken of.

So the years went by quietly and uneventfully enough at our little cottage. Nora seemed fairly happy, and was the joy and delight of the two old people. I had succeeded well in my profession, and was now master and part owner of a smart barque sailing out of Bristol.

Squire Melton was dead, and the Vicar had left the district. 'Haynes v. Haynes' had stopped for good, apparently, in whichever of those courts the lawyers had left it last when funds fell short. James still held the property, was married, and had a son. It seemed a poor lookout indeed for Nora's ever returning to Clayhorns as its mistress. People, generally, when they thought of the affair at all, accepted the state of things as settled. And willing enough though many undoubtedly were to help to remove the slur cast on her parents' memory, no one in that community was rich enough to start the case again.

That Nora at times still felt it acutely, we at Elm Cottage knew only too well. Her faith in and love for her lost father were strong as ever. At each return her questioning eyes would meet mine, but always in vain. Beyond that last brief message from the sea, I could hear nothing of the fate of the vessel whose rigged namesake we could see from our windows.

At last my mother died. The old home was broken up; and in pursuance of a scheme long looked forward to and prepared for, I asked Nora to be my wife. We had, in the good old-fashioned sense of the word, been courting ever since I came back from that West Indian voyage to find her shot up and moulded into the prettiest girl for fifty miles around the Wrekin. So, without any backing and filling, she just said 'Yes;' and a week afterwards I took her on board the *Daphne* and sailed for Hong-kong, via Singapore, as a honeymoon trip. Having now got things a little clear and ship-shape, I am going to tell you by what curious chance the fate of Captain Roly and his good ship, and the fair fame of his wife and daughter, were, after all these years, made manifest.

We had passed Anjer, and were lying becalmed in the island-dotted Strait of Banca, when, one morning, the cook suddenly discovered that he was out of coal. Ordering the boat to be lowered, I told the second-mate to take three hands and pull to the nearest island for a load of wood, either drift or from the bush. On their return, and whilst they were handing up their cargo just abreast of the galley, Nora, walking forward and looking curiously at the assortment of planks, trunks of trees, and such-like rubbish that they had collected, suddenly cried out to me, standing at the break of the poop: 'Oh Harry, Harry, my father's ship!'

Thinking the sun had been too much for her, I ran to where she was pulling away at a

bit of plank which stuck up from the heap. It was one of the head-boards of a ship that her eye had happened to light on, and on which, in large black letters, was printed 'WREKIN. LON.' The rest was broken off. But that it was a portion of Captain Roly's old ship there could be no doubt whatever. In the first place, the name was a peculiar one; then it was not, in those days, very often that a vessel carried her name on her head-boards; the beading had once also been gilded, as was that of the lost ship's. No one amongst the boat's crew seemed to be certain as to the precise spot it had been picked up in. But presently a boy who had accompanied them remembered pulling it out of the sand on the little beach where they landed. He had noticed the lettering, which indeed looked remarkably fresh, but had thought no more than that the plank would make 'fine kindling chips for the doctor.'

We then set to and overhauled every splinter of the stuff; but, with the exception of a bit of spar and a fragment of a grating, there was no sign of any more ship's furniture. However, I was quickly in the boat, and, with Nora, who wished to come, heading for the island. I eyed it curiously as we approached. It was only a rock, hardly more than a quarter of a mile round, but fully a hundred feet high, and covered everywhere, except at the little white beach, with tropical vegetation. Stepping ashore, we examined every nook and cranny, but without making any further discovery.

For my own part, I did not think that the *Wrekin* could have been wrecked either here or in the vicinity without some one hearing of it. Besides, these narrow seas were, as a rule, too well charted for skippers to run against any unknown danger. As I pointed out to Nora, who was unreasonably certain that we stood near the very spot, if not actually on it, the board might have floated in hundreds of miles from either the Indian Ocean or the China Sea, to its last resting-place on this little islet. Also, most vessels passing Anjer were noted, and their destination ascertained. Inquiries, I recollected, had been specially made of the Dutch authorities, and they replied that nothing had been seen or heard of the *Wrekin*.

But Nora was not to be convinced. 'My poor father's bones are lying with his ship somewhere near this rock, Harry,' she said, wiping away the tears. 'Providence led me to see that piece of wood. It was no chance. Surely we can find out by some means. And, oh Harry,' she whispered, 'perhaps the secret of his marriage and the will!'

'Even so, Nora,' I replied. 'The papers were pulp long ago, and digested in fishes' bellies. Nothing of that sort could stand such a soaking.'

'All the salt water in the ocean would never destroy the contents of the Sultan's Egg, Harry,' said she. '"Air-tight, damp-tight, and dust-tight," I once heard father say, when he was showing it to the Squire.'

'But how on earth are we to find out, Nora?' I asked, perhaps a little vexed at her insistence, and knowing, as I did full well, that Captain

Roly would never run his ship slap into a place like this.

'If it isn't too deep,' said she, 'couldn't some one dive? Or stay; we might drag with hooks, as I once saw people doing in the Severn.'

'And then?' I asked.

'Well, then, if we find that the ship really is there, go to Singapore and hire a professional diver, and let him go down.'

I confess this rather staggered me. Nora appeared to have the affair quite taken for granted, besides developing suddenly a fund of resource I had never given her credit for. All the business I had in Singapore would only take a couple of days at the most to transact, and here was my lady playing Old Harry with the voyage. 'Well, well, dear, we'll see,' I answered. 'Meanwhile, I fancy there's a breeze coming off the Sumatra coast.—Pull back sharp, Mr Brown, and get the deep-sea lead. We may as well find out what water we've got here.'

Twenty-five fathoms—twenty—eighteen—sandy bottom. Then, as we pulled round to the Banca side, it deepened again to twenty-five; and, before another cast could be taken, the boat's keel scraped over a reef running out, as we saw, for a considerable distance.

'By jingo!' exclaimed the second-mate as he picked himself up—for he had been standing with the lead in his hand, and the shock had capsized him—'there's a pretty customer for a ship on a dark night and everything set.—Is it charted, sir?'

'Sure to be,' I answered shortly, seeing Nora's eyes fixed on my face. 'I don't remember it, though. Let's get on board. Here's the breeze at last.'

Hastily taking its bearings, I ran down into the saloon to find the islet on the chart. Sure enough, there was the black dot—Pulo something or other—and soundings given as 'deep water' all around it. Not a vestige of a reef for miles. Looking at the date of the chart, which was an Admiralty one, I saw that it was not yet twelve months old.

'Can it be possible,' I thought, 'that Nora is right after all? No reason why, because the *Daphne*'s on the safe side, with twenty fathoms under her, that the *Wrekin* shouldn't have been on the wrong one, with a stiff breeze, a dark night, all plain sail, and a poor look-out for white water. Besides, perhaps, then, it wasn't to within feet of its present height. A ship hitting it would go down like a stone, with everything standing.'

Communing thus with myself, and staring at the chart in no very satisfied frame of mind, in comes Nora, and putting her arms round my neck and kissing me, asks, 'Well, Harry?'

'I'll do it, dear,' I made answer. 'We'll leave the *Daphne* in Singapore, and hire a diver, if there's one to be had, and come back and see what we can find. The firm will be vexed at the delay, I expect; but I fancy my share in the old hooker's enough to carry me through.'

'I shall sleep easier to-night, Harry,' she replied, 'than I thought I should.'

Not much relishing such discoveries in a main ocean thoroughfare, until our arrival at

Singapore I kept a man with his eyes skinned on the foreyard in the daytime, and the lead going pretty constantly both night and day right along.

THE SCENE OF GRAY'S ELEGY.

ON a fine afternoon last autumn the writer stood with a friend on the Terrace of Windsor Castle, and as we looked at the charming prospect before us, the Thames winding along through rich meadows, and overshadowed by the stately trees of Windsor Park, and the beautiful Chapel of Eton rising in the distance, our thoughts recurred to the poet Gray, who has immortalised this very scene in his famous 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.'

And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way.

Within those venerable walls of Eton the poet passed the happiest years of his life in the constant society and companionship of his chosen friend, Richard West, son of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, whose thoughtful, studious nature accorded with his own, and whose affectionate disposition endeared him to all his school-fellows. Gray was once asked by a friend if he recollected 'when he first perceived in himself any symptoms of poetry,' and he replied 'that it was when he was at Eton, when he and his friend Richard West took pleasure in reading Horace and Virgil for their amusement, and not in school-hours, nor as a task.'

Poor West died of consumption at an early age. Until a few days before this sad event took place, the friends continued to correspond on literary subjects, West being apparently quite unaware that his life was in danger, for in the very last letter he wrote to Gray, he expostulated with him for giving way to low spirits, and advised him 'not to converse so much with the dead, but to seek for joys among the living.'

When at Eton, West was supposed to have possessed more natural genius than Gray, and he might have been one of our most celebrated poets. His 'Ode to May,' which he wrote shortly before his death and sent to Gray, is a poem of great promise. Gray was at that time living with his widowed mother at the little village of Stoke Poges, near Windsor. He had come back to the scenes of his boyhood a sorrowful, disappointed man, his prospects blighted by his father's improvidence; and his beloved friend, whose affection had soothed and cheered him in his darkest hours, slowly sinking into the grave. Gray's first poems were written at this period of his life, and are all pervaded by a tone of deep melancholy. The 'Ode to Spring' was sent to his friend; but he had died before its arrival; and the 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College,' the 'Ode to Adversity,' and the first part of the 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' were written in the autumn of that same year, though they were not published for some time afterwards. These

were indeed 'lays of sorrow born;' and no doubt the time of year, 'the melancholy days' of autumn, were not without their influence upon the poet, and seem to have brought his great loss continually before his mind.

Gray, on receiving the news of his friend's death, and in the first outburst of his grief, wrote the following exquisite sonnet:

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;
The birds in vain their amorous descent join;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas, for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require:
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain;
I fruitless mourn to him who cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

The Ode on Eton College is generally considered his best poem, with the exception of the famous Elegy; but the melancholy which marked him for her own becomes quite morbid as he looks at these joyous schoolboys, whom he presently designates as 'the little victims,' and consigns them in the future to all the ills that flesh is heir to! In an essay on Gray, Lord Carlisle observes that one of 'the little victims' was Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington! We must remember, however, that the mournful fate of one Eton schoolboy was constantly in his thoughts.

The churchyard of Stoke Poges is generally believed to have been the scene of the celebrated Elegy. Being anxious to see a spot so full of interest, we started from Windsor to the neighbouring town of Slough, from which it is an easy walk to Stoke Poges. Our path lay through cornfields, where the reapers were at work; and although it is a very flat country, it is thickly wooded here and there with pine-trees, which filled the air with fragrance. Gray's own expression, 'incense-breathing,' might be fitly applied to the air in this region. After we had walked for some time through the fields, we came out on a romantic country road, where the trees met overhead, and which led up to the churchyard. The 'ivy-mantled tower' soon met our view, and all the other features of the scene described in the Elegy—'the rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade.' The poet's eye rested, perhaps, upon one immense yew-tree which stands in the centre of the churchyard, overshadowing numberless turf-heaps. Gray's tomb is about a foot from the church tower. The lower part is of brick, with a stone slab on the top. On this are the two inscriptions to his aunt, Mary Antrobus, and to Dorothy Gray, 'the careful, tender mother of many children, of whom one alone had the misfortune to survive her.' We were sorry to see that this inscription, unrivalled for its pathos, was very nearly effaced by time. The poet's name is not on the tombstone; and it was not for many years after his death that a slab was placed on the sill of the chancel window recording the fact that Mr Thomas Gray, author of the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, is interred in the same vault with his mother and his aunt.

Gray himself, then, for some time was one of the 'unhonoured dead' whom he has so touchingly commemorated. There were a great many rude headstones, upon which we read some strange doggerel, reminding us of the 'uncouth rhymes' and 'shapeless sculpture' of the Elegy; and many of the graves were covered with violets which seemed as if they had grown there spontaneously. They recalled to our minds that exquisite verse which Gray intended to have included in the Elegy, but which he afterwards rejected:

There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

A low wall divides the churchyard from the grounds of Stoke Park, in which there are some magnificent trees; and there is still a wing of the old manor-house remaining in which Gray spent so many happy hours, in the society of his friends, Lady Cobham, and her niece, Miss Speed. In a letter to Dr Wharton, he speaks of his intercourse with them as his 'only amusement,' without which he 'would only have his own thoughts to feed upon, which were gloomy enough.' Gray has given a humorous account of the beginning of this intimacy in the verses entitled 'A Long Story.' Although it cannot be proved that Gray was ever in love, yet he seems to have felt some admiration for Miss Speed. He mentions her often in his letters to his friends, and wrote, at her request, the song set to an old air by Geminiani:

Thyrsis, when we parted, swore
Ere the spring he would return.

Miss Speed seems to have been a rich, fashionable, young lady, fond of society and amusement; and it is probable she never had any sympathy with the silent, melancholy poet. When Lady Cobham died, she married a wealthy French Count, son of the Sardinian Minister, and who was fully ten years her junior.

Gray met her again some years afterwards, and thus describes the interview to his friend, Dr Wharton: 'Madame de la Peyriere is come over from the Hague. I sat a morning with her before I left London. She is a prodigious fine lady, and a Catholic (though she did not expressly own it to me). She had a cage of foreign birds, and a piping bullfinch at her elbow, two little dogs on a cushion in her lap, a cockatoo on her shoulder, and a strong suspicion of rouge on her cheeks. She was exceeding glad to see me, and I her.'

In an adjoining field, overlooking the churchyard, we saw a monument to Gray, which was erected in 1799, twenty-eight years after the poet's death, by Mr John Penn, grandson of the great William Penn, of Pennsylvania. It is a large block of stone, surmounted by an urn, and at one side there is an inscription, as follows: 'This Monument, in honour of THOMAS GRAY, was erected A.D. 1799, among the Scenes celebrated by that Great Lyric and Elegiac Poet. He died July 30th, 1771; and lies unnoticed in the Churchyard adjoining, under the Tombstone on which he piously and pathetically recorded the Interments of his Aunt and lamented Mother.'

On each face of this monument there are appropriate verses from the Elegy; and on the side which is opposite to Eton College we read the pathetic lines:

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain.

The sun had set when we turned to take a last look at the churchyard; and in the deepening twilight we could realise more and more the truth of that wondrous description of 'the hour of parting day,' familiar to most of us from our childhood—a fitting prelude to the solemn thoughts called forth in the succeeding stanzas.

Gray's Elegy is said to be the most universally popular poem that ever was written; and it has been translated into more languages than any other composition in the whole range of English literature. Its popularity seems to have astonished even the author himself, who attributed it entirely to the captivating pathos of the subject: 'Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.'

MY RIVAL'S REVENGE.

At one time in my life I had the sole charge of a signal-box on one of our great main lines in perhaps the most desolate part of the three kingdoms—at least, it was desolate enough during the winter months. Then, except for the freight of human beings that the trains bore past at stated intervals, I did not see a creature from the time that my mate left me until the hour when he came to relieve me of my duty. But the lonely life troubled me very little, for I was of a thoughtful turn of mind, and, truth to say, at most times preferred my own company to that of others. Thanks to my own exertions, I was better educated than most men in my sphere of life. I had a turn for practical engineering, too, and it was in this direction that my ambitious fancy often led me on.

The railway company, in whose employment I had been for some years, had found me useful to them, and had been pleased to acknowledge my services by promising me a position of trust and importance—such a position as men ten years my senior had waited for in vain. In a way, then, my future was secured, and I was only filling the post of signal-man until the vacancy should occur for me to drop into.

Some little distance down the line where my signal-box was stationed ran the big river that gave its name to that part of the country, and over this river a bridge—the construction of which was somewhat out of date—carried trains into the next shire. Much depended upon the bridge, and one of my chief duties was to keep it clear for passenger trains. Goods-trains and the like that did not come up to time were shunted off by a sharp curve into a siding that ran along by the river's bank.

One November afternoon—and a typical November day it was, dark and dismal, with a

heavy oppressive feeling in the air—I was at my post in the signal-box. I was not in a particularly cheerful frame of mind, but I put this down to the weather, and it certainly was enough to give any one the 'blues.' It had been blowing hard all day; but, as the twilight came on, the wind had fallen, and there was a sense of thunder in the air, while that strange stillness which portends a storm had settled over everything. I had a bright fire burning, and I rose from my seat beside it and gazed, in turn, through the many windows of my small domain. The out-lying country looked very dreary; without doubt, a storm was at hand. Even as the thought passed through my mind, there was a muffled, rumbling sound which came nearer and nearer, until one mighty crash broke overhead, and, an instant after, the whole place was filled with blue, lurid light, which made the darkness that succeeded it the more intense. Another rattling peal of thunder, the sound of which echoed far and wide, and then the flood-gates of heaven seemed to open, and the rain poured down—rain and hail, that the wind lashed against the windows with a fury that seemed irresistible. It was well that my little tenement was securely built, or such a storm must have brought it about my ears; as it was, at each blast of wind it rocked again, and the fire was all but extinguished by the hail that fell, hissing and spluttering, upon the burning coals. In all my experience I had never witnessed anything like that storm. At no great distance, the river, swollen and turbulent, was rising above its banks, hurrying along, and bearing down all that came in its way.

I was not afraid of a storm. I told myself again and again that I was not afraid, but somehow this storm had strangely affected me. I paced my little room from end to end, brooding over my past life, dissatisfied with myself, and feeling—for conscience makes cowards of us all—that I would have given worlds had I been a better man. Then I tried to recall some good deed I had done in days gone by that would encourage me; but, instead, there came before me with startling distinctness the remembrance of a man who had been my rival—my antagonist—one Matthew Holt by name, a man who had openly and persistently avowed himself to be my enemy. It was some years since we had parted. Poor Matthew! I could think of him pityingly after that lapse of time, although his last words had been full of bitter passion, as he swore that one day he would have his revenge. He had gone abroad. I knew not what had become of him; he might be dead. It was not often that the thought of the enmity between us troubled me. When it did cross my mind, I had been wont to lay the blame entirely on him; but on that night I saw the past with different eyes. Perhaps there are other men who, looking back to the time when they were in the twenties, feel half contemptuous for their former selves. At any rate, that was how I felt. 'Ah! Frank Bryant,' I said to myself, 'you fancied yourself a very fine gentleman, indeed, and in many ways you were little better than a conceited coxcomb.' Then, with an

effort, I brought my mind back from the past into the present.

The first fury of the storm was somewhat spent. The rain still streamed down the many panes of glass that surrounded me, and the wind rushed by with an angry moaning sound, but the thunder was growing each moment fainter. I replenished the fire and looked about me. The signal-box, in which so many hours of my life had been spent during the last year, was lighted by several jets of gas; and fitted into their appointed places along the wall were the many mechanical contrivances, the use of which must puzzle the uninitiated, and upon which so much depends for the safety and despatch of our great railway traffic. I myself was like a bit of the mechanism of the whole, for does not habit often become mechanical? And no matter how busy my thoughts might be, there could not have been a movement among the signals, a vibration in the electric bells, but I should have been on the alert, with eye and ear, rendered keen and watchful by long training.

While I listened to the storm, I had not been forgetful that a goods-train was far behind its time, and as I turned from my fire, I had warning of its approach. It could not cross the bridge on such a night, and perhaps endanger the evening express which would soon be due, so I turned the points and sent it off into the siding. I heard it rumble past with a feeling of pity for the engine-driver and guard, who were forced to delay in such weather. As I turned from the levers, having sent the metals back into their places, in readiness for the express, I raised my eyes, and became aware that a man's face was pressed against the wet glass at the end of the box—the pane over the door. As I looked at that strange face, those wild, angry eyes, and the red hair blown about by the wind, my heart seemed to stand still with a sudden terror. I felt, indeed, as if I looked upon a ghost, for the face before me was no other than that of the man who had been haunting my thoughts for the last hour—my old enemy, Matthew Holt!

For an instant only we looked into each other's eyes, and then he disappeared. Even after I had lost sight of him, I was too bewildered to think or act; but as soon as I recovered my presence of mind, I hurried forward and opened the door. The light from within showed me that the little flight of wooden steps that led to the ground had no one upon them. I went down a step or two and peered about me, but the darkness was impenetrable. I shouted out, to know who was there, but no answer came. The rain beat in my face, and the wind was so strong that I could scarcely stand. I re-entered my box and closed the door after me. It was then, and only then, that the conviction forced itself upon me that what I had seen was an apparition, a mere delusion on my part, caused by the morbid influence of the storm and by my brooding over old times.

But no matter whether the face I had seen was real or imaginary, it had set me off dreaming of the past once more, and for the next few moments I allowed my thoughts to take me where they would. They carried me back to a time when I had gone down to that quiet

little Welsh village to do my part in putting down a new line. I was smart and active—a good-looking youngster, too, in those days; so, who could wonder that pretty Nancy, the beauty of the village, transferred her affections from her yokel lover to me. Matthew Holt was a powerful young giant, but ungainly enough to look at. An unmannerly cub, too, in my estimation, and I had treated him accordingly. Yes, it was in that direction that my conscience reproached me, when I remembered how I had lost no opportunity of placing him at a disadvantage and asserting my own superiority. Not content with winning for myself the prize he coveted, I must confess that there were times when I took a malicious pleasure in making my unhappy rival smart. I have seen his eyes blaze with passion, and his brawny fists double themselves ready for a blow. And yet, he never laid a hand upon me; and I knew that his forbearance was only for Nancy's sake. His was an odd nature, and even I could not but admire the strength and devotion of his love.

My pretty Nancy! How well I could remember the pride with which I carried her off as my bride from her village home, and for a while life was very sweet. But it was not long before death claimed her, and she passed away, leaving only a tender memory behind, which, as the years went on, seemed almost like a dream.

I sat staring fixedly into the fire, living over those old times again, and wishing, alas! an idle wish, that I had acted differently, when suddenly a cold blast of wind swept through the room, blowing the gas about and making the fire flare. The door must have come open, I thought; I could not have shut it properly. I rose to secure it, but before I could turn round, I received a violent blow upon my head. It was dealt with such force that I fell heavily to the ground, and for a moment lost all consciousness.

When I came to myself, I found that I was lying on the floor, bound securely hand and foot. The door of the signal-box was shut, and standing before me, but with his eyes fixed on the levers, was Matthew Holt. He looked, as he was, years older than when we had last met; but I could have sworn to that big, loosely-made figure, and that shock of red hair, anywhere. In an instant I had realised the whole situation, and seen how completely I was in his power. Yes, the hour of reckoning was indeed at hand. He had come, in all the strength of his brute force, to take his revenge. He seemed suddenly to become aware that I had recovered my senses, for he turned and looked at me, and as I met the pitiless expression in those savage, bloodshot eyes, my heart turned sick and faint within me.

After contemplating me in silence for a moment, he said sneeringly: 'So, Mr Frank Bryant, you remember me?'

'Yes, I remember you,' I answered, speaking as calmly as I could; 'and although there was not much love lost between us in the old days, I never then thought of you as a coward—one who would take a mean advantage of his enemy.—Come, Matthew Holt, unbind me; let

us meet on an equal footing, and I will hear what you have to say!'

He threw back his head and laughed, a short, mocking laugh that was not pleasant to hear. 'No, no, my fine gentleman; you don't come over me with any of your smooth-tongued speeches,' he said.

There was another pause, during which he drew a bottle from his pocket, uncorked it, and drank. It was strong spirits, I could tell by the smell of it. I shuddered. This was not likely to improve his mood. Indeed, at the first glance I had noticed in his eyes that savage recklessness which comes of the madness born of drink.

It seemed as if nothing could save me. Poor Nancy! There was no thought of her to come between us now, with its softening influence. In all probability, the fact of her death had but recently become known to Holt, and that would in a manner account for his appearance. As this thought passed through my mind, I watched him with a kind of fascination, wondering what the next move would be. He replaced the bottle in his pocket, and drawing the chair into a position from which he could see me, sat down. 'Do you know why I am here?' he asked.—I made no answer; and he went on: 'I will tell you. I am here to take my revenge for the brutal way in which you treated me in days gone by. Yes, Mr Bryant, the tables are turned; I have the upper hand now!'

'And for the sake of a foolish boy's taunts, you would risk bringing the charge of murder upon your own head!' I returned bitterly.

'You think I intend to take your life,' he said coolly, 'but you are mistaken. To kill you would be to end your misery; and there are many things worse than death. It would be harder for you to live with a stain upon your name. Ruin and disgrace would bring your proud spirit down.'

I was bewildered. What could the madman mean? At any rate, it was a relief to hear that I was safe from bodily harm; for the rest, how could he touch me?

'I know all about you,' he went on—'how you have got round your employers, until you think your fortune is made! But how will it be with the company's favourite servant, after to-night?' As he finished speaking, Holt rose and took the levers in his hand, changing the points, as I had done an hour before, so that the next train would run, not over the bridge, but down the siding, on to the trucks of goods that were already standing there.

'What are you about?' I cried, struggling wildly to free myself. 'Matthew Holt, for God's sake, think what you are doing!'

He made no answer, but, leaving the points as he had placed them, resumed his seat, looking down at me with a leer of triumph, that made me see more clearly the pitiless nature with which I had to deal. The whole scene was so horrible, that I felt as if I were in the grasp of a nightmare. So this was his revenge! To ruin me, he was prepared to commit a crime so dastardly that the very thought of it made my blood run cold. God knows that at that moment no thought of my own responsibility, or the blame that would be attached to

me, was in my mind; everything was swallowed up in the knowledge of the terrible fate that awaited the evening express. I could think of nothing but of those unhappy men and women that each moment brought nearer to their doom.

From where I lay, I could see the clock and watch the signals, and I knew that the train was even then due. No words can describe the agony of that moment. My heart beat so that I could scarcely breathe, and every nerve in my body seemed to have a separate pulse of its own. I could only feel and think—I was powerless to move.

I listened, half mechanically, to the moaning of the wind and the beating of the rain upon the windows, for the storm had sprung up again with redoubled fury. Then, with one last effort, I broke into a torrent of eager words, imploring Holt, by all he held sacred—by the God above us—by the memory of old times—of the girl he had once loved, to pause before it was too late, and think what he was doing. I pictured the horrors of a railway collision, and bade him remember that the blood of all those ill-fated creatures would be upon his head. But he only laughed at my ravings, telling me calmly that he had counted the cost, and that 'the game was worth the candle.'

It was just then that there was a movement among the signals, and the electric bell rang out, heralding the approach of the express. Almost at the same instant I could hear in the distance the sharp, wild scream of its escaping steam, and I knew that it was actually at hand. For a moment my reason seemed to desert me. I can remember rolling over upon the floor, struggling madly, passionately, to be free. But all in vain, for, as I lay there, panting and writhing, the train swept past. And then I remembered no more.

How long I lay there senseless I cannot tell; it must have been hours, but it might have been days or months, from my dazed sensations as I struggled back to life once more. As I lifted my head and looked about me, my bewilderment increased, for my room seemed full of people. Strange faces bent over me in anxious solicitude. I gazed at them blankly for a moment, then, with a rush, it all came back to me—the events of that terrible night! I sprang up, crying out wildly to know what had become of the express.

An old guard whom I knew, and who was, in fact, the guard of the express, stepped forward and laid his hand on my arm. 'She is safe,' he said impressively—'saved by you.' Presence of mind. It was a dangerous game, my lad, but our only chance; and God be praised, it worked splendidly.'

I could not understand him, and turned to the others for an explanation of the riddle. And bit by bit it was all made clear. It seemed that the old bridge, which had long been looked upon with suspicion by the engineers, had not been able to stand against the storm, but had collapsed, and only a few seconds before the express should have passed over it! It was believed that I had become aware of the perilous state of the bridge too late to stop the train, and

had therefore resorted to the only other alternative—that of sending the express into the siding, after the goods-train. This in itself was eminently risky; but, thanks to the severity of the storm, the express was going at a reduced speed, and the engine-driver, finding himself upon strange metals, had applied his brakes, and brought her up when within a few yards of the wagons; and thus a great catastrophe had been averted. Every one was loud in my praise, declaring that had it not been for my presence of mind and the promptitude of my action, hundreds of lives would have been lost! I denied this, and tried to explain what had really occurred. But it was an incoherent story, and in the excitement of the moment, few paid attention to it.

Holt had evidently carried out his plan of revenge to the letter, for I had been left unbound, and he had allowed no one to see him near my quarters.

The next day, in the river, among the débris of the fallen bridge, the dead body of a man was found. He was a stranger in that part of the country, and I was the only one who was able to identify him. But I said as little as I could respecting him, as I had no wish to brand his name with shame.

My nerves were so tried by the strain they had gone through, that I never again undertook the duties of pointsman, and the night of the great storm was the last that I ever spent in a signal-box.

THE SLEEP OF PLANTS.

To ramble at night in field or garden is to open a strange and almost fantastic chapter of plant-life, for so essential is light to healthful vegetation, that scarcely a tree, shrub, or blossom but in some way changes its aspect when daylight fades. We find ourselves in a 'pleasing land of drowsyhead,' where familiar plants have assumed the most whimsical postures, or even changed their aspect altogether. One form of the acacia appears at night as if covered with little bits of dangling string instead of leaves; whilst a bank of nasturtiums presents a still more peculiar effect—every slender stem bent at the top, so that each round leaf is tilted on its side. We see balsams with each leaf sharply declined, lilies and eschscholtzias with closed cups and hanging heads; the lupine, 'the sad lupine' of Virgil, its blue spike of blossom erect as at daytime, but with every wheel-shaped leaf drooping against the stem like a closed parasol. Limas and scarlet-runners seem withered, all the leaflets nodding, as if broken at the jointure with the stem; the flowers of the potato plant, saucer-shaped by day, now pucker their white rims in gathers round the central stamen; and partridge-peas present a picture of drooping listlessness. Poppies, 'lords of the land of dreams,' are most somnolent of all; soon after sunset, 'their four damask curtains are drawn closely, the inner petals coiled within each other above a tiny crowned head, whilst the outer pair enfold all in their bivalve embrace.'

All the clovers are a drowsy family, and keep

early hours, like the daisy, which Chaucer poetically tells us 'fears night and hateth darknesse.'

And whan that it is eve, I runne blithe,
So soon as ever ye sonne sinketh west,
To see this flower how she will go to rest
For fear of night, so hateth she darknesse.
Her cheere is plainlie spread in ye brightnesse
Of ye sonne, for then she will uncloze.

The Sleep of Plants is so conspicuous a phenomenon that it excited discussion and speculation as early as the time of Pliny, and many explanations were given, which science has since disproved. The drooping of the leaves was attributed by some botanists to an aversion to moisture, a theory which had to be abandoned when such movements were made on cloudy days and dewless nights. The clover tribe, which always close their leaves at night, revel in rain; and nasturtiums will go through a day of tempestuous weather without showing any inclination to change their position. Linnæus was the first to give to the subject special study and scientific research. Whilst watching the progress of some plants of lotus, he began that series of observations upon which his great work 'Sleep of Plants' is based. He found that nocturnal changes are determined by temperature and the daily alternations of light and darkness; movement is not actually caused by darkness, but by the difference in the amount of light the plant receives during the night and day. Many plants, notably the nasturtium, unless brightly illumined in the day, will not sleep at night. If two plants were brought into the centre of a room, one from the open air and the other from a dark corner, the neutral light which would cause the former to droop its leaves, would act as a stimulant upon the latter.

That nocturnal changes are necessary to the life of some plants, Darwin has proved by a number of skilful experiments. He found that leaves fixed in such a way as to be compelled to remain horizontal at night, suffered much more injury from cold and dew than those allowed to assume their natural nocturnal positions, and in some cases lost colour, and died in a few days. However different attitudes plants take in the day, they have, with a few exceptions, this point in common—at night, the upper surfaces of their leaves avoid the zenith, and come as closely as possible in contact with the opposite leaves. The object gained is, undoubtedly, protection for the upper surfaces from being chilled by radiation. There is nothing strange in the under parts of the leaf needing less protection, as they differ widely in function and structure. It is this radiation of heat which the peasants of Southern Europe fear, more than cold winds, for their olives, and which induces gardeners to cover seedlings with thin layers of straw and spread fir branches over the wall fruit-trees. In the case of some plants, when the leaves droop and fold together, the petiole or leaf-stalk rises, thus making the plant more compact, and exposing a smaller surface to radiation. The tobacco plant does not droop its leaves, but folds them round the stalk, presenting much the appearance of a furled umbrella.

The drooping of foliage leaves has another

use besides the prevention of excessive radiation; by this means the tissues bearing chlorophyll—the green colouring-matter of plants—is preserved from injury. A low temperature destroys the normal condition of chlorophyll, a fact to which the autumnal colouring of foliage is attributable.

Whilst foliage seems most affected by alternations of light and darkness, blossoms are most sensitive to changes of temperature. The marigold, which, says Shakespeare,

Goes to bed with the sun,
And with him rises weeping,

will expand its petals, in dry weather, between six and eight o'clock in the morning, and close between four and six o'clock in the afternoon; but in rainy weather, or under cloudy skies, it remains closed. The sensitive plant not only shuts spontaneously at sunset, but will do so whenever the temperature of the surrounding air rises above fifteen degrees Centigrade; and fifty-two degrees Centigrade causes permanent loss of motility and death. The crocus is essentially a morning flower, and closes soon after mid-day; whilst some plants—among them the evening primrose and some forms of campion—expand only in the evening or during the night. Wood-sorrel has been found to assume 'an attitude of sleep' in direct sunlight. Thus the sleep of flowers is by no means strictly nocturnal, but may be largely attributed to the laws governing pollination. The petals fold to protect the stamens and other sensitive parts of the blossoms from excessive cooling and wetting; and open to gain the benefits of light and warmth and the aid of insects in the dispersal of pollen.

A JUNE MADRIGAL.

O Cuckoo, calling when the dawn is breaking,
And all the meadow-land is dewy-white,
Rouse, rouse my love, that, from their rest awaking,
Her tender eyes may bring the tender light.
Tell her the rose-tipped hawthorn flowers are falling;
Tell her the summer season has begun;
Tell her the silver lilies, mutely calling,
Wait in her garden till she bring the sun.

O Cuckoo, calling through the sunny daytime,
With liquid notes filling the shady grove,
Now is the noontide rest of Nature's play-time;
Clear ring thy voice, and speak to her of love.
Through wintry ways and dreary days of sorrow,
Poor Love hath wandered, waiting for the May,
His sad eyes looking for the fair to-morrow,
The morrow of his hopes, that is to-day.

O Cuckoo, calling while the dew is falling,
And twilight shuts the eyelids of the day,
Sing in her dreams, lest any shape, appalling
Her snow-white soul, should frighten sleep away.
And, ere the eventide has blinded wholly
The latest glimmer of the Western light,
O Cuckoo, call again, repeating slowly
One last low note to bid my love good-night.
S. CORNISH WATKINS.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited,
47 Paternoster Row, LONDON; and EDINBURGH.